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SPECIFIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS:
OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Note by the Secretariat

The present note supplements and updates as at 16 December 1998 the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (A/53/339).

GE.99-10363 (E)

Introduction

1. The purpose of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/122 of 17 December 1991, is to assist representatives of non-governmental organizations from different regions dealing with issues of contemporary forms of slavery to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, by providing them with financial assistance and by extending, through established channels of assistance, humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery.

2. The Fund is administered, in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, by the Secretary-General, assisted by a Board of Trustees composed of five individuals with experience in the field of human rights, in particular contemporary forms of slavery, who serve in their personal capacity for a three-year renewable term. The five members who have recently been renewed or appointed by the Secretary-General (from 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2001) are: Mr. Swami Agnivesh (India), Mr. Theo van Boven (Netherlands), Mr. Cheikh Saad-Bouh Kamara (Mauritania), Ms. Tatiana Matveeva (Russian Federation) and Mr. José de Souza Martins (Brazil).

3. The fourth session of the Board is scheduled to take place from 24 to 26 March 1999.

Financial situation of the Fund

4. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/122, funding is obtained by means of voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities.

5. Upon recommendation of the Board of Trustees all the funds available in 1997 (US$ 23,850) have been spent for travel and project grants (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.2/1997/4, annex and A/53/339, para. 14).

6. At the invitation of the Bureau, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Swami Agnivesh, made a statement before the Commission at its fifty-third session: He stated that "in order for the Board to be able to ... respond to the requirements of a minimum number of applicants, we would need the very basic amount of US$ 100,000. Otherwise, the Board would not be in a position to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it".

7. As at 1 July 1998, the date on which the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly was drafted, the voluntary contributions paid to the Fund were not sufficient to allocate travel and project grants, nor to organize the fourth session of the Board of Trustees, which had to be postponed (A/53/339, para. 9).

8. In its resolution 1998/20, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities expressed its appreciation for the contributions made by donors to the Fund and urged all Governments, non-governmental organizations, other private and public entities and individuals to contribute annually in order to enable the Board of the Fund to fulfil its mandate effectively.

9. As the date of the drafting of the present report, 18 December 1998, the amount available for allocation by the Board of Trustees for travel or project grants in 1999 was approximately US$ 100,000. 1/

Contributions

10. The following contributions, were received from Governments as at 18 December 1998: 2/

State	Amount in US$	Paid in NY/GE	Paid on
Cyprus	1 000	GE	12 May 1998
France	85 000	GE	4 Nov.1998
Ireland	29 600	GE	6 Nov.1998
Kuwait	25 000	GE	1 Sep.1998
Turkey	5 000	GE	20 Feb.1998
United Kingdom	8 465	GE	19 Oct.1998
TOTAL	**154 065**		

11. The following contributions were received from non-governmental organizations and individuals as at 18 December 1998: 3/

NGOs and individuals	Amount in US$	Paid in NY/GE	Paid on
Istituto Tecnico Commerciale Romero Viale (Italy)	940	GE	3 November 1998
Mr. Sadiq M. Marafi	675	GE	8 September 1998
M.L.A.L. Movimiento Laici, Italy	379	GE	27 October 1998
Operazione Terzo Mondo, Italy	2 000	GE	19 October 1998
Mr. Yorio Shiokawa	2 027	GE	21 September 1998
Ms. Halima Warzazi	503	GE	28 May 1998
TOTAL	**6 525**		

12. The total amount of voluntary contributions received since the third session of the Board is therefore US$ 160 590.

Pledges

13. The following pledge is outstanding as at 18 December 1998:

State	Amount in US$	Pledge in NY/GE	Pledged on
Japan	50 000	NY	4-5 Nov. 1998

14. In view of the new contributions received and available for disbursement, the Secretariat of the Fund and Board has started to disseminate application forms for both project and travel grants to non-governmental organizations who deal with contemporary forms of slavery, including those who had been selected previously but could not receive a grant due to lack of funds. About 80 applications have been sent to relevant NGOs that work on contemporary forms of slavery. About 100 application forms have also been disseminated by the Secretariat at the "Etats généraux des défenseurs des droits humains" (The Human Rights Defenders Summit) organized in Paris on 8 and 9 December 1998 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

15. Concerning travel grants, in accordance with previous recommendations of the Board and upon consultation with the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, priority will be given in 1999 to those non-governmental organizations who work on the following questions related to contemporary forms of slavery which appear in the agenda of the 1999 session of the Working Group and that will be discussed during that session: trans-border trafficking in persons, especially women and children; economic exploitation of domestic and migrant workers; bonded labour; child labour; forced labour; and sexual exploitation.

Human rights defender's prize awarded to a beneficiary of the Fund

16. A prize for the defence of human rights, named after Mr. Paul Gruninger, a Swiss citizen who assisted victims of the Second World War in seeking asylum in Switzerland, was awarded by the Administrative Council of the City of Geneva on 12 December 1998 to Ms. Anita Khadka recognizing and encouraging her work for the prevention of trans-border illicit trafficking of the girl child. In 1997 Ms. Khadka had received a travel grant from the Fund which allowed her to participate in the May 1998 session of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and bring her testimony. At the session, Mr. Yokota, member of the Working Group, thanked Ms. Khadka and applauded her courage. He remarked that she had brought trans-border activity to the attention of the Working Group. The observer for India to the Working Group made a statement on the framework that had been put into place to protect women and children from commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. The observer for Nepal expressed the need for international cooperation and support so that society was able to combat such exploitation (see A/53/339, para. 16 and E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/14, paras. 88 to 92).

17. The prize, consisting of a certificate and 30,000 Swiss francs, was given to Ms. Khadka by Mrs. Ruth Dreyfuss, President of the Swiss Confederation, at an official ceremony in Geneva. Authorities of the City of

Geneva and the Director of Forum 98 and of the World Organization Against Torture/SOS Torture, Mr. Eric Sottas, also took the floor and praised the courage and work of Ms. Khadka as a member of Maiti-Nepal, Ms. Khadka, a Nepalese citizen, at the age of 12 was promised a good job and marriage by a pimp, was then abducted, raped, tortured, arbitrarily detained in a brothel and forced into prostitution in another country.

18. Maiti-Nepal is a non-profit organization based in Kathmandu and present in other areas of the country where girl trafficking exists. The organization runs a rehabilitation centre and shelters for young girls. It provides education, counselling in personal health care and disease prevention and job training to women, including former prostitute children, to help them become financially self-sustainable by teaching them income-generating skills and providing them with small business loans. Maiti-Nepal also educates the general public, public officials, politicians, students and the media about girl trafficking and child prostitution and mobilizes concerned citizens against these practices. Maiti's prevention centres also welcome girls who are at high risk of being trafficked. The aim of the organization is not necessarily to send these girls back home to their guardians, who are often the very people who originally sold them or abandoned them on the streets, but to provide them with a safe place to live, find a sponsor for their education and improve their health.

How to contribute to the Fund

19. Contributions to the Fund can be made by payment to: The United Nations Geneva General Fund c/o UBS AG, P.O. Box 2770 CH-1211 Geneva 2:

- in US$: c/o UBS AG New York,
  Acc. C0-590-160.1,
  Swift address: SBCOUS33; or

- in CHF: c/o UBS AG,
  P.O. Box 2770,
  CH-1211 Geneva 2,
  Acc. C0-590-160.0,
  Swift address: SBCOCHGG12A

20. Contributions can also be made by cheque to the Cashier's Office, United Nations, New York N.Y, NY 10017, United States of America, or Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

21. In any case, please make payment to the order of the "United Nations" and "For the UN Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, account SH".

Note

1/ According to information available at OHCHR and taking into consideration the obligation to deduct 15 per cent for the operating cash reserve and 13 per cent for programme support costs.

2/ According to Official Receipt Vouchers available at OHCHR.

3/ Ibid.